

Student Press

1937

The Tangent: An Annual

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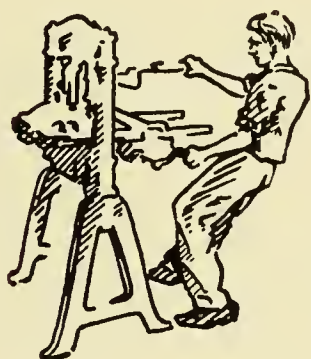
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T H E T A N G E N T

The
TANGENT

★ NINETEEN ★
HUNDRED
& THIRTY
• SEVEN •



PUBLISHED BY STUDENTS OF THE
ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ART, TORONTO



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The staff of this year's publication have spent a great deal of time and energy in trying to bring the standard of this book definitely out of the general class of a "school magazine."

After all the plans had been made, it was discovered that they would involve such expense as to render them prohibitive. But the plans were so attractive that the staff determined to carry them out—although it involved doing much of the actual production themselves to meet the expenses.

Special mention must be made of those of the production staff who were entrusted with the printing of eleven of the prints, thirty-two plates in all, or eleven thousand, two hundred impressions on a Washington hand-press—which they did at an average speed of six impressions a minute—with a total of but three "spoils."

Grateful thanks are due Mr. F. Carmichael and Mr. R. W. Murphy for their patience with the staff in giving them their much-needed advice and assistance.



ON A VISIT TO THE ZOO

“**B**ETWEEN the two of us, my friend,” I said, “’tis time we struck for parts unknown, the congeniality hereabouts has a trifle strained grown.” Forthwith, in similar waggish vein, my comrade voiced his plea, “With your wise sentiment, O sir, I full heartily agree, but where, in truth, is there such a part unknown — or known, knowing not of we?” At this, goblet raised to his lips, he quaffed and continued between sips. “Holà to you! Holà to everybody! Albeit they look askance, staunch mate, and disparage our love of fellow creatures, to show themselves, i’ faith, imbued with hate.” “Not all God’s creatures, surely,” I replied, “are with this evil feeling falsely dyed. I would fain know if other beasts behave in this way too. Why not, for further cognizance, bestir ourselves unto the Zoo?”

And when after many curious twistings, the Zoo was reached in spite of perilous listings, arm in arm, with the railing firmly gripped, we bravely strode into the lions’ very den, into their prison abode. We peered at our furry brethren in their cages and nodded knowingly to one another, like old sages. When lo! as a visitor to the last Bohemian Ball was heard to say, he thought what he had feared most would happen, had happened that day; for, before our very eyes the walls did melt and we trembled as we, the oncoming animals, felt.

There gathered round a host of monkeys, which to the beasts behaved as flunkeys, and in the centre, a pink flamingo posed, as if it were that life forever dozed. To each monk in turn there went a duck and the Zoo was conscious of incessant cluck. “Is that flamingo not but

a collection of straight lines?" (By which the subtle curves a charlatan divines.) "Observe the inter-relation of that proportion and let's see less of this distortion." The duck with flashing shrewdness in his eyes and never failing fervour his occupation plies, when superimposed appears a vision of analogous classes, with different masters for the monks in masses.

Here perky pelican "fait son cours", enlightening with wisdom his pupils poor. "If you would swallow what I tell you whole, as I do my fish, there would come to you with little or no difficulty what you wish." Over there a bear's mighty paws are teaching that inorganic matter well taketh richening, and nearer yet, another bear deducing, that point "A" through ground line needs producing. And all around were piled uninspiring tins and food pots, at which the little animals gazed and bemoaned their life lots.

One of the dignitaries of these pots was heard to say, "I make a rule to keep my feet from pupils' pots well out the way, but finding my resolution more difficult to keep to, day by day, but what other means in all this room, have they to make their food pots burst with bloom?"

At this juncture a rabbit popped from cage unseen and relieved in laughter, unvented spleen. His humorous antics the marmosets in fun upbraid, and with twitch of nose and kick of heel he hasty exit made. Heralded thus, the noise dying from howl to hum, an elephant appeared upon the scene to come, and when his dignity was by stumble marred, the rascals found restraint of glee most hard; with trunk as pointer (there had on hand no other been), he used a light upon the wall as screen. The numerous scratches there were soon endowed with "immense and extraordinary" qualities to the crowd, but 'twas plain to see they were better in imitation than following the intellectual's intimation! That reminds me, the bear for little reason said, "Of an anecdote the other day I read."

"And that reminds me, my friend," I sighed, "Our quota must have been too many tried, so henceforth conservative we should ride, for the very thing we thought too much would hide, has come before us and proved it lied!"

W. G. Tobin

AUCTION

Vincent Van-Gogh, they're selling you off.

Look at the frock-coat holding a sketch: ¶ "What am I offered?
Twice that it will fetch! ¶ This is the master's best period —
Higher!" ¶ (Lady Ann So-and-So there, is the buyer.)

Love comes so dear, cut off an ear.

"Here we have something unique in still-life." ¶ (See Colonel
Fi-De-Dum nudged by his wife.) ¶ "Ten! twenty!!—*t-h-i-r-t-y?*
Come, Come, now, you trifle!" ¶ (The Colonel got rich on a new
army rifle.)

Empty or fed, straw makes a bed.

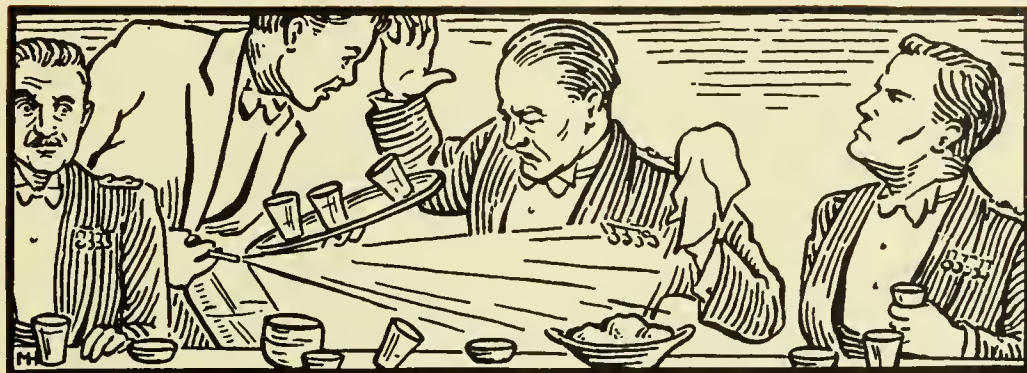
"This was last auctioned at two thousand pounds. ¶ Watch as I
turn it the luminous grounds. ¶ Here at the edge it is signed with
his name. ¶ Less than five thousand is really a shame."

Poverty buys, hunger and flies.

"Who could have done such a thing with old shoes? ¶ Offer me
twenty. There's nothing to lose." ¶ Sold to a dowager with furs
and a pom. ¶ ("Now she'll have something to tantalize Tom!")

*Scrape out the paint, work till you're faint;
While you're alive, desperately strive;
After you're dead, honour instead;
Vincent Van-Gogh, they're selling you off.*

Donald C. Stewart



M'LORD, THE WAITER

THERE were no lords there and besides I wasn't a waiter, I was a wine-steward. You might know, if you were interested, and doubtless you are not, that a wine-steward is a johnny who drags around a tray whereon lies anything but tea, coffee, or milk, and who should never toy with the idea of allegiance to any given temperance league —. Do I make myself clear?

At any rate, one summer vacation not so long ago, it occurred to me that it might be an excellent idea, in the best interest of local society and humanity, to say nothing of my moth-eaten pocket-book, to entertain, not too seriously tho', the thought of getting — not a job, but a position. In other words and in short I was out to give some employer what might be termed "a break". I had already been everything from a sailor and gas-disher-outer to a musician and back, and there seemed to be no very good reason why I shouldn't try being a wine-steward in the officers' mess of a nearby army camp. . . . So there I was, tray, white coat, etc., armed with everything but the knowledge of what I was there for and the experience in handling siphon bottles with one hand while holding the tray and glasses, etc., in the other. Something always gives way in a case like this.

Our quarters were in a separate building and our beds — did I say beds by any chance! — were arranged around the wall à la boarding-school dormitories. . . . The sleeping business became a problem, as I soon found out that I could only cram in about sixteen hours a day

of real honest unconsciousness. I spent half the day in bed, a quarter of it trying to get out of bed, an eighth getting back to bed, and the other eighth of the day was spent eating and thinking of going to bed. That should give you a rough idea of how fatigued I was at the end of two weeks.

We ate in a large tent . . . By we I mean the flies, stewards and flies, (sounds like a law firm, I could easily add two more partners and they would both be called flies). As soon as the bugle went, so did we, legging it across the field as fast as we could to sit down at the table before the "humming birds" gathered to pay active tribute to our choice of food. I always started eating by holding the fork or spoon in my right hand, which left my left hand free to sweep the area just above the plate, my centre of interest. When my left hand became tired, I just reversed the method of attack. By these means I could keep up a running attack on the flies and eat at the same time. I think every insect, and his brother, west of Quebec, took two weeks off to come to join us.

The actual business of wine-stewarding was never very threatening at any time. At any banquets, I always took a sudden interest in washing glasses, or some such nerve-racking job that required my somewhat highly-trained but nevertheless vague attention; thus I managed to avoid all areas of danger as I had an increasingly difficult time suppressing a mania for squirting soda-water in someone's face. Finally I could withstand the temptation no longer and armed with a smile of resignation and a siphon-bottle, I marched into the dining-room to await the first unsuspecting victim who would be foolish enough to entrust me with his order. I waited and waited and waited in vain, until finally a general (no less) beckoned to me. I trotted over trying to wipe the smirk off my face, and bent over respectfully awaiting his order. It must have been Kismet, or fate or something, it was my bug-bear, scotch and soda. Anyhow back I came with his four ounces. He hesitated a moment before attempting to pick up the glass. "He who hesitates is lost" they say, and in that fateful hesitation lay the realization of my yen. He jiggled the glass, and not to be outdone I jiggled the lever of the siphon-bottle, and Holy

Mother in Ireland, didn't I hit him dead-centre on his chest! Medals, Tunic, and sleeves no less, and I was so amazed, I forgot to take my thumb off the lever. It looked like Niagara Falls by moonlight, with all the spray going haywire, and all the medals clanking in the steady stream. Between the look on his face and the reaction to a realized secret desire, I laughed so much I had to retire for the balance of the banquet. Nothing ever came of the incident and I think the gentleman felt at fault for juggling his glass. I was repaid the next night by someone doing the same thing to me. This was my first and last sally into the realms of "in service" . . .

Harry Howard

LAURENTIAN SUNSET

LANGUIDLY, as in a dream, we strolled without toil toward a mellow heaven at the end of our earth trampled path, where brave new leaves of grass spring unafraid through hardened soil. ¶ I've heard it said that ghosts of men tread lightly.

Squat and solemn, a farmhouse grows upon a mountain crest, from roots that man did plant, and having planted died and left to die. ¶ Above and beyond the horizon of hills, the hues of many moods are painted there by strokes of a brush in the gifted hand of God. ¶ A cloud clothed in raiments royal floats overhead.

I felt the beauty of the scene and knew then, as I know now, that true beauty is recorded deeply on Man's emotional disc.

Seeds that are sown beyond my control require a returning to many worlds of people. ¶ But the braver of my two souls bids me stay, here, forever. ¶ Unto time beyond reckoning.

Stanley Arnaula



THE NEW THEATRE

THE theatre is indeed one of the most interesting and forceful mediums in which to express an idea, and furthermore, to express it artistically, or shall I say, artfully, as the whole thing is really a matter of deception. When you enter the theatre, you immediately make yourself receptive to the forthcoming hour or two of deception and illusion; willing to pretend, as well as the actors, thereby being able to experience more completely the effect of reality. I refer to the reality of experience, and not reality of the kind belonging to the production in which the famous actor insisted on having the actual books of the period in the bookcase. The day of the tree stump and grass matting is fading, thank the higher powers. At last they have discovered that leaving something to the imagination is not only more complimentary to the intelligence, but is deeper in its statement. The Chinese have been doing it for some two thousand years — in their particular style.

The theatre too, then, is going "modern" by exploring the primitive and the abstract. Where? Productions of this kind are rare in this day when there are still millions who would much rather pay to be amused than pay to think and learn, but they are coming. They are doing it in Russia. It is to all this that the artist, in particular, may look forward. More than ever before will the artist be needed, though perhaps not the one who can reproduce an old stone fireplace so perfectly that you feel you could wipe the soot from the chimney. They will be the creators, the welders of the imagination. In this medium they are not confined to two dimensions of canvas or paper, or three dimensions of clay or stone. Their materials are the figure, mobility, an unlimited variety of plastic materials, and light to paint them with. A succession of paintings and not just one. What scope for ideas!

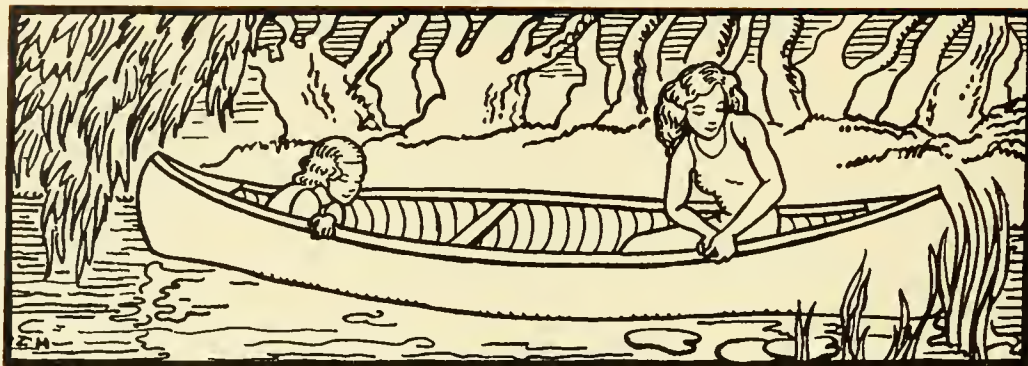
There are limitations of a technical nature, and of course, the dear public, but we can always compromise with the limitations and sometimes with the dear public, because, after all, they help to pay the

expenses (they never seem to completely pay expenses) and are useful in supplying applause for the actors, who don't like acting in an empty theatre just for "art". Obviously we have to change the public point of view so that they may better appreciate these endeavours, and the only way to do that is to start — er — changing the public point of view. In this large but sparsely populated country, our hope is in the Little Theatre where already great development has been shown since the advent of the movement, instigated by Lord Bessborough about four years ago. Although a great many of the enterprises mimic the professionals, they fail in the purpose of the Little Theatre, which is not merely an exhibition booth for a local boy to practice acting on in the hope of being seen by a Hollywood Girl Guide. On the contrary, it is an opportunity for intelligent and talented people of similar ideals, to group together in producing important works of theatre art, with a group ideal, and not an individual one.

Chekhov has the ideal plan in his Art Theatre in Darlington, England, where his "actors" must undergo a rigorous training in playwriting, direction, stage designing, costume designing, lighting and fencing, though they be only intent on acting as their own medium. So too, should the stage designer learn to act. In this way there is an understanding of one another's problems. An actor who has also a knowledge of drawing and colour is better able to create an effective makeup. The effect of coloured light upon makeup is a problem which requires considerable practice to solve. The dramatic qualities of stage lighting, with its luminosity and perspective, its rich colours, are a source of delight and inspiration in themselves to the artist. Here again, what is the sense of designing various compositions with the lighting if the actor has no knowledge of it, and so spoils both his own part and the whole effect, by not completely taking advantage of it.

This New Theatre is essentially a "group" medium in the complete sense of the word, and I think important discoveries and accomplishments await that group. Is there one in Canada? Is it likely to appear soon? I hope so.

Eric Aldwinckle



ROMANCE

TWO girls, a red-head and a blonde, dressed in the gayest of summer colours — a red canoe floating on a sapphire blue, amid a paradise of green—soft breezes and a brilliant golden sun—and around the bend awaits Romance.

How often reality leads to disillusionment! The truth was, it was a hundred in the shade but it felt like two hundred and Flo and I were drenched in olive oil. We were rather messy-looking objects; our shorts, although bright in colour were rather oily — with reason; our hair was more than slightly ratty, for the same reason — our canoe was red alright but very, very muddy from the last fishing trip, when the can of worms was spilt. The water was blue and the sun was gold — but Oh! what a hot and scorching sun. But the romance business?

We rounded a bend and from Flo an excited “Oh there he is!” And sure enough there he was. He sat there, waiting, bless his little heart, and he was quite puffed up with satisfaction to see us. Did you ever know a woman to let a man lie in peace? I haven’t. But he didn’t know or guess — or maybe he did. Very quietly, sort of bashful-like, Flo got out the good old hook and line — the bait that always gets them. I — being made of slightly sterner stuff, manoeuvred our craft closer. He seemed much too sleepy to pay us much attention, although I think he was only trying to pretend that he wasn’t interested. How like a male! Flo finally let out an unholy

gurgle — she had hooked him!! Being a man, when he realized he was landed, he of course put up a bit of a fight — just for our benefit, I imagine, as most men hate to get down to facts. I must admit that after a while his antics struck me as being a trifle boring, so I tapped him over the head — not too gently, I'm afraid, poor fellow!! I guess I don't know my own strength, because he went limp in my grasp, and this time I'm sure he wasn't acting. He was too good an exhibit of our fatal charms to leave behind, so we took him with us. I suppose you have already guessed what he was — why a frog, of course!

And the Romance? Try frogging sometime, it's very thrilling — you use a different approach and attack every time. Frogs, I think, have more to them than men — you usually know just about what a man will do, but with a frog, ah, that is a different story.

Trude Berkeley

VOLUPTUARY

With calculated smile we ask, and indicate the silvered flask. ¶ When negroid revelry exhausted, Strauss is swooningly accosted. ¶ Muted brasses, sly violin; a waltz is played — no Harlem din. ¶ We dip, we glide, we slowly sway, we raptly swirl in another's way. ¶ Muffled light obscures the room, clothes in secret fantastic gloom, the solemn, self-conscious grace, the moist melancholy of each face. ¶ What mist of perfume and cigarette! ¶ What blowing of sobbing clarinet! ¶ What nameless bliss is this we seek, cheek to gently sweating cheek?

Ted McCormack

SHADES OF LOVE

Colourless as gin

“**I** REALLY am fond of the cut of his trousers, and simply adore how he flings out his youssirs. ¶ When he goes to a dance dressed in Esquirish shirts, I answer his coarse cracks with ‘skip it’ or ‘nerts’. ¶ The more I see of him, the more I am bored, and I shudder to hear him say ‘baby, I’m floored’. ¶ But he has become such a habit with me, I guess we will marry and live happily.”

Pastel Pink

“I sought love, and found only lust. ¶ The surface was hidden by a coating of rust. ¶ Its beauty was covered, as I soon discovered, by mud that was made out of our very dust.”

Brilliant Red

“Love? Well, y’see, my Mary and me, we cannot live without it. ¶ If that is love then I sure know a hell of a lot about it. ¶ But if it ain’t, it seems to be, good enough for Mary and me.”

Raw Sienna

“Dear God, this child is mine by right of sorrow and of shame. ¶ My self-respect, my chastity, so horribly, horribly slain. ¶ Dear God, I have not sinned, I have only loved, but loved in vain.”

Virgin White

“I would keep the colours of love clean and brilliant, because love is just that. ¶ I would compare young womanhood with the unadulterated petals of a lily, . . . as calm, as poised, as beautiful. . . . ¶ I would liken young manhood to a sturdy oak upon a crest of land, . . . a proud challenger, symbolical of strength and power. ¶ And I would speak of their union in a hushed tone—as I would speak of God and of Divinity.”

Stanley Arnould

PASS THE FUNNIES, PLEASE!

“**K**INDLY move well down into the back of the car!” And while you are there observe your fellow-passengers and especially those who have newspapers or magazines. Does it surprise you to discover that over half of them are looking at comics or humorous drawings?

That gentleman to your left is worried about his favourite comic character's latest adventure; while that old lady follows with suppressed delight the romantic tale of a lover, as told in strips of pictures advertising soap or shoe-polish. Perchance you think that that dour-looking man is reading the obituary or stock exchange, but, if you look, you will find him grimly enjoying the political cartoon.

Humour is daily becoming more and more a feature of our lives, and few indeed are the morning papers that do not encourage a smile at the breakfast table. A few years ago a comic paper was a rarity, something to be treasured and secreted from the family who would destroy it as trash. But now all ages and all classes of people have their own pet comic figures which they read regularly. Some evening papers publish as many as three full pages of “funnies” each day; and the papers published on the day previous to a public holiday are noteworthy by the double quantity of comics.

From the annual, or even less frequent comic-book, we have come by leaps and bounds to this age of large daily comic papers; and show no signs of abating our eagerness for more and more. In fact I will go so far as to predict that newspapers will not be “news” papers but for the most part “comic” papers. The radio will supply the news in an ever more efficient manner and the papers will supply what the public appears to want — “funnies”.

“Popeye” has done more for the widespread consumption of spinach than the best-laid advertising campaign. Will the comics soon be backed by large companies who seek to use them as an indirect means of mentioning their goods? At any rate a recent and widespread

development is shown by the well-known firms who run their advertisements in the form of comic strips. Imagine a comic advertisement for a well-known, expensive car without even a picture of a car in it; but that is exactly what has happened. Cars, spark plugs, insecticides, hair tonics, socks, beverages, soaps, cereals, razors — almost every class of product has been advertised lately with cartoons of this type.

There is a certain affinity between our present-day comic figures and the gargoyles and bench-ends of the historic old cathedrals. The art-workmen, lay and ecclesiastical, who carved these gargoyles were the direct forerunners of the Hogarths, the Sayers, the Gillrays, the Rowlandsons and the Cruikshanks — men who first established the famous English School of caricature.

To "Punch" is chiefly due the great popularity which pen-draughtsmanship has achieved in England. The magazine has at one time or another employed the pen of every humorous artist of note in England. The paper has become not only an institution — it has been almost a school of art; and even now as it approaches its hundredth year of publication is enjoying great popularity.

With the introduction of what are termed "Silly Symphonies" the demand for artists for this work is tremendous. Hundreds of artists are employed in drawing these cartoon movies, which require such great quantities of drawings before being filmed.

We are witnessing an immense growth of cartoon and caricature in art. The speed of its progress has been such as to outstrip almost every other line of artistic change. From the first comic-book of the nineteenth century — to the vast quantities of such in the present — to a future embracing television, we realize that perhaps no other field offers such remarkable opportunities for the artist.

Jane Rankin



IF I WERE THE DEVIL

(Sequel to "If I were God")

IF I were the devil, I'd be so weary of little men praying so piously
with folded hands and disbelief in their hearts!

¶ Pretenders and hypocrites and liars all! ¶ Little men
trying, oh so vainly, to fool their God and keep free of me!

If I were the devil, I'd throw to the lions of hell all those who were
false, and all who ridiculed the precious and beautiful of life.

¶ They and I would fight to the finish.

¶ In truth they are worse than I!

If I were the devil, I would ask: "Since I am as despicable as man says,
why not inspect your own soul; will you not find a hint of me there?"

If I were the devil, I would like to find one man who is sincerely
good or frankly bad.

I would like to find one man aware that I am in league with God!

Patti Visser

Royal blue, crimson, ermine, coronets to determine where to rank
and how to set Duke and Earl and Baronet. ¶ From Ethelred,
Egbert and William the First, down the long line of the good and
the cursed. ¶ Come orb and sceptre, right and might, flash of jewel
and gleam of gold, gorgeous pomp and pageantry joining days of old.
Now present day people, let the bells ring. God bless our Queen
and God save the King.

E. M. P.

And that of course was after he had been sometime dead; they missed
his sudden laughter, and pondered what he'd said. ¶ Not until the
greening of spring was on his grave, his words took ample meaning—
his laughter seemed so brave.

D. S. C.



NOT MENTIONED IN THE SHIP'S LOG

IT was in the unholy hours of the morning, when all decent and sensible people are in bed, and only soused sailors and amorous felines are haunting the streets, that I had uncertainly steered my way back to the ship from a nearby beer-joint. Somehow I had miraculously navigated the narrow and extremely fragile-looking ladder over the dark gulf between the dock and the ship.

As I was too under-the-weather at that moment to realize that I had to be awake in about two or three hours, sober and ready for work, I decided to pace the poop-deck and review the hilarious incidents of that night. I was thus amusing yours truly when suddenly my self-indulging thoughts were rudely interrupted by the heart-rending discords of some song being butchered by a couple of shipmates, Tommy and Jock, who were having a great deal of difficulty in directing their rebellious legs along the dock to the ladder.

They finally reached the bottom of the ladder and standing too near the edge of the quay for comfort, and prompted by some dormant sense of courtesy, each in turn insisted that the other should go up the ladder first.

It was a commonplace ladder under ordinary conditions — very old, not altogether safe, a few rungs broken, cracked or missing — easy enough to scale normally, but not so easy under the circumstances. It was placed across a dark forbidding chasm between the ship and the dock, lashed at the ship end and let free on the dock to allow for the

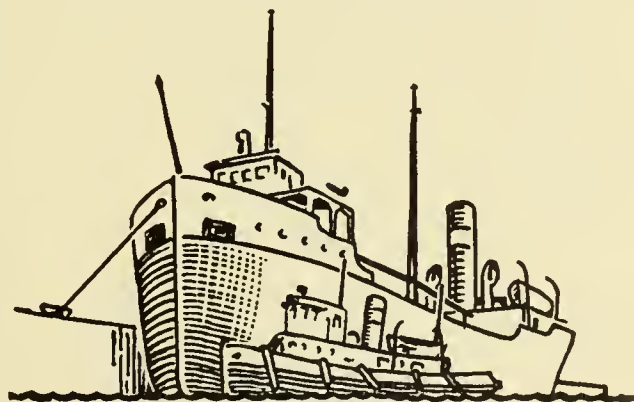
continual motion. The wharf was a solid mass of piles broken only here and there where a few of the piles had given way to Father Time.

When the argument was settled Jock was the one elected to go up the ladder first. He began quite confidently and was getting along quite well, carefully feeling his way up, stepping over the gaps where the rungs were missing and not stepping too hard on the cracked ones. His success was his undoing though, for he became over-confident, and suddenly lost balance and with a mouthful of meaty curses headed for the cold, oily, muddy water below. A great splash coming up from the dark abyss heralded his undignified entrance.

All I could do was to stand by the rail, nearly bursting my sides with laughter, and look at Tommy's face as it alternately registered disgust at Jock's clumsiness and utter bewilderment at the empty ladder. Meanwhile Jock had struggled to the surface and it slowly dawned on us that he couldn't swim a stroke and that the ship was ominously swinging into the dock, threatening to crush him beyond recognition.

Then Tommy acted, the realization of Jock's horrible fate had sobered him somewhat, so without further hesitation he jumped in after the clumsy unfortunate. At the same time I ran for a rope. When I came back Tommy had manoeuvred Jock into one of those happy openings in the quay saving them both from certain annihilation. The fireman on watch happened at that moment to pop up for a spot of tea, so between us we hauled the now very sober and wet gentlemen on board. Tommy came up last using every word in his extensive ship's vocabulary, to curse stupid fools who had to fall into the water while he was wearing his brand new suit of shore clothes.

George Zwior



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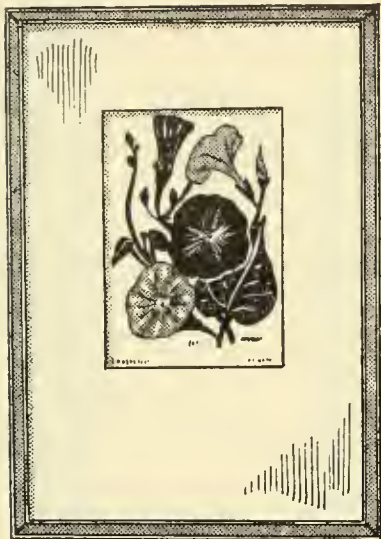
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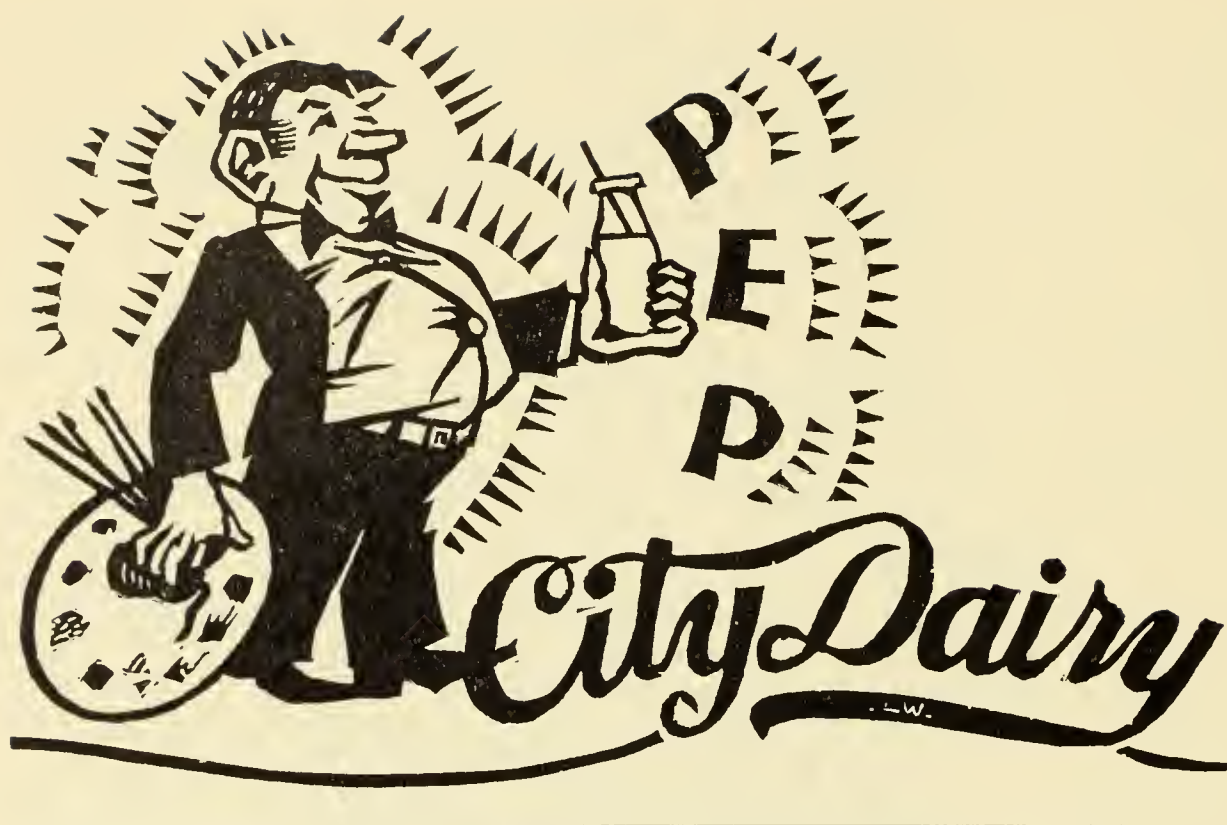
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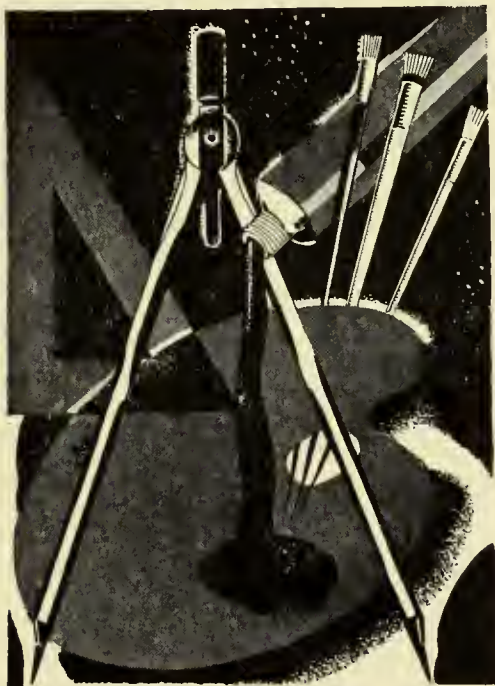
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